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For Pamplin family

Spirit of love evident in Christmas Eve tragedy

By FRANCES ABBITT

It was the afternoon of Christmas Eve and the Brochard household in the Pamplin community was all ready for the forthcoming holiday. The tree, in all its splendor, kept watch over the pile of gaily wrapped packages just waiting for the excitement of Christmas morning.

It was almost Christmas and all was well. Terry and Guy Brochard had driven over to a neighboring farm to feed some livestock for friends who were spending the holiday with friends and family. The Brochard children, Tanya, Jeanine, Kerri, and Chad were visiting with their grandmother, Betty Brochard who lived nearby in a mobile home.

"Muz" as Betty was known to her grandchildren, loved having them over as much as they liked to visit. The excitement of Christmas was in the air, and as the children helped "Muz" set the table for Christmas Eve dinner, the excitement mounted.

It was appoximately two o'clock in the afternoon when neighbors saw smoke pouring from the Brochard home. Quickly they went to the farm where the Brochards were taking care of the livestock. They summoned help and went quickly to the burning house, but in spite of all their efforts the house was gone.

It was approximately two o'clock in the afternoon when neighbors saw smoke pouring from the Brochard home. Quickly they went to the farm where the Brochards were taking care of the livestock. They went quickly and help was summoned but in spite of all their efforts, the house was gone.

The family home, which had been completely rebuilt by Terry and Guy, their furniture, family clothing, cherished family photos, paintings by Terry's father, saddles for the family horses and ponies were gone. Gone too, the gifts that had been lovingly bought for family and friends and all the delicious food that had been prepared for the holiday celebration.

How does a parent explain to a child that Santa Claus may not be coming after all?

"When I was a child, I used to confuse Santa Claus with God," said Terry Brochard. "I know now that I was not very wrong."

Realizing with deep gratitude that the children were safe and that, they too, were safe, the parents began to think of what to do about gifts and Santa Claus.

"I tried to think of how to explain to a child that Santa is not magic and does not pop in with toys on Christmas no matter what happens. Boy was I wrong!" said Terry.

The Brochard children were settled in bed in 'Muz's" house when the gifts began to pour in.

"People swarmed in with toys, games, gifts, food, clothing until Grandma's house was filled to overflowing," said Terry. "On Christmas morning, the children hopped out of bed and exclaimed, "Mama, Santa Claus really did come!"

The spirit of love and concern that poured forth from the people of the Pamplin community and surrounding areas was overwhelming. The Brochards who moved to this area approximately two years ago from New York had never seen such an outpouring of love and compassion.

Immediately after the fire, the first thought that came to Guy Brochard was to pack up and return to New York. But, the friends, and even strangers who poured in with gifts, money and offers of help convinced them that this is where they want to be.

"There is no doubt, we will stay here," said Guy. "People have been wonderful; we know we are among friends."

"Well, I believe now that Santa Claus and God are very much the same, and I will never again have any doubts about His making sure we have a Merry Christmas," said Terry.

"On this past Saturday from 10 a.m. until 4 in the afternoon, a shower given by Margaret Garrison, Peggy Gobble, and Frank Ramsey held at the Masonic Lodge in Pamplin. The gifts poured in, a washer, dryer, electric stove, lamps and many other things," said Terry.

"We would like to extend a very sincere thanks to the stores in Appomattox, the employees of Buckingham Correctional Facility, Lynchburg General Hospital, all the local churches,and a very special thanks, which cannot be expressed in

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A QUIET EVENING AT HOME was rudely interrupted last Tuesday when this Mustang rammed through the living room wall of John and Dot Torrence of Sherwill. The Torrences, who were in the house at the time, came into the living room to find the driver unscathed, out of the car, wandering about the room. He soon ran off, however, leaving his wrecked car in the Torrences' living room. As of Monday, state police were still looking for Kenneth Nathaniel Mobley, 28, of Concord, in connection with the accident. Mrs. Torrence said that the car was going so fast when it hit the house that it "flew right over the Christmas tree and gifts, not hurting them, but it demolished the living room and part of the family room." The house, which is only two years old, was extensively damaged. "I'm just thankful no one was hurt," said Mrs. Torrence. "You can replace material things, but you can't replace a life." (Photos by Jeff Spitzer)

School Board to meet

The Appomattox County School Board will meet in regular session on Wednesday, Jan. 11 at 3:30 p.m. in the School Board Office.

Included on the agenda for the meeting will be consideration of a vocational education plan; a report on the reading program at Appomattox Elementary School; a curriculum committee report; an Appomattox Middle School Building (Vo Ag) committee report; and enrollment and financial reports.

The meeting is open to the public.

THE BROCHARDS, GUY, TERRY, and their four children, Tanya, Jeanine, Kerri and Chad lost their home and everything in it on the afternoon of Christmas Eve but they found the true spirit of Christmas in the love and compassion shown them through the generosity of friends, area citizens and businesses. The Brochards, who moved to this area two years ago, know now, that this is where they want to be. (Photo by Frances Abbitt)

First baby of the new year arrives on schedule

Appomattox County's first baby of 1984 wasted no time in making her appearance, arriving at Farmville's Southside Community Hospital at 1:44 a.m. New Year's Day, Jan. 1.

The baby girl, Hannah Louise Price, is the fourth child of Richard W. Price, Jr., and his wife, Charlotte S. Price, who live in Pamplin.

Hannah Louise weighed eight pounds, 15 ounces at birth. Her attending physician was Dr. J.M. Turner.

Richard suspected that he and his wife might be in contention for Appomattox County's "First Baby of the Year" honor when the baby procrastinated. "My wife was due on Dec. 27," notes Richard. "When the due date approached, we joked that maybe we would have a New Year's baby."

The Prices realized that their child might win the **Times-Virginian's** "First Baby of the Year" contest when he read about the event in the Dec. 29 issue of the paper. "I read about it in the paper when I picked up a copy at R&K Grocery, in Pamplin," said Richard.

After the initial joy of the birth, the Prices realized that their child had a good chance of qualifying for the "First Baby of the Year" honor. "When I found out that she won, I was surprised, and real proud," Richard said.

Charlotte said that "I didn't think at first that we'd be in the running (for the first baby honor), because I thought I would have the baby later in the day."

She adds that "quite a few babies were born New Year's Day, but all were born later than Hannah."

The Prices have three other children: Rodney Kent, age 17; Timothy Eugene, age 13; and Tracy Ann, age eight. "The boys wanted a little brother," notes Charlotte. "But Tracy wanted a little sister, very badly. She told me that she was praying for a little sister, then I found out I was expecting. It was a miracle."

Hannah's grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. R.W. Price of Madisonville, and Mr. and Mrs. Anderson Shelton of Pamplin.

Richard is an employee of R.W. Burruss in Pamplin, and Charlotte works at Craddock Terry Shoe Corporation in Farmville.

As winners of the "First Baby of 1984" contest, the Prices will receive a variety of gifts from area merchants.

Included among the gifts from merchants are:

A $10 savings account from Farmers National Bank;

A case of ready-to-feed Similac formula from Appomattox Rexall Drug Store;

A box of new-born Pampers from Tolley's Market;

A $10 gift certificate from the Heritage Inn restaurant;

A hand-loomed baby blanket from Pope's Family Center;

A haircut for Mrs. Price from Melanie's Shop;

A chauffered trip home from the hospital in a new car, or a free family-car check up from Moses Motor Co.;

A pair of StrideRite shoes from Stephen's Fashions;

A child's rocker from Schewel Furniture;

A $10 gift certificate from Appomattox Hardware;

A free portrait sitting of Hannah and Charlotte from Allen Austin Photography;

A $10 savings account from Pamplin City Branch of the First National Bank of Farmville;

A free four-wheel balance for the family car from Webb Tire Company;

Roses for Charlotte from Elliott's Florist and Gifts;

A baby dress from Joy Rags factory outlet;

A baby feeding spoon from Wilkes' Jeweler's in Appomattox.

"The merchants in the county are very kind to sponsor this contest," Richard said early this week. "These gifts will come in very handy for us."

Charlotte also expressed her gratitude for the contest gifts. "This is the type of thing that we'll always remember," she noted. "It's a once-in-a-lifetime kind of thing.

"I'm happy we won the contest," she concluded. "And most of all, I'm happy to have it (the birth) behind me, and thankful for our healthy little baby girl."

CHARLOTTE PRICE OF PAMPLIN and her daughter, Hannah Louise, the first mother and the first baby of 1984 in Appomattox County.

Father Darkleaf

By CALVIN ROBINSON

Most anyone could write a "column" the first week of a new year. Mainly because they could write of Resolutions and Predictions, and they are wide open subjects. I made no resolutions, unless you would so designate an intent not to cross bridges until I get to them. And a hopeful prediction for my senior citizen car. From '63 through '83 and many happy miles; if the car's alive come '85 we are going to be all smiles.

* * *

And we get an extra day in 1984, a Leap Year. My comment is that if we are to be given an extra day, Why give it to February? Why not June or September? One must admit that it would not do to leave the choice of an extra day to individual choice. Many would ask that the extra day be a pay day. Or an extra day on vacation. Or another try at something you lost out on. Two birthdays? Two Christmases?

* * *

And 1984 will see National Elections. Good candidates are available. Take part be a voter and accept the results in good grace.

* * *

Other favorite Resolutions include: To read more, especially good books. And to have a successful garden. I have several garden catalogs at hand and no harm in planning ahead.

* * *

Appomattox Resolution. To help make the annual Railroad festival bigger and better than ever. And for more visitors at our National Park Service. And for a good year for our Pay rolls. Jobs are so important.

Headlines we would like to see in '84. How about: ACHS Raiders win Seminole Title!

* * *

Thanks for a most interesting news letter from Dr. and Mrs. A.O. Guy, of Memphis, Tn. Mrs. Guy is the former Faith Lewis, of Appomattox. Successful family. One daughter is a professor, Memphis State U.; a son is a minister. A daughter is a public school principal, Enid, Okla. Appomattox is proud of this outstanding family.

* * *

Hurrah for my friend, Robert S. Miner, Pamplin. Brought me a Dec. 25 issue of **The Birmingham NEWS**. In its 90th year, this issue had 174 pages. One of the best newspapers have seen and I read and read and read.

* * *

Fans of the Washington Redskins are floating on a cloud of victory. Many see this year's Skins as perhaps the best.

* * *

There will be a new postage stamp, honoring the 25th anniversary of statehood for Alaska. Do you save stamps? I used to but it got out of hand and gave up. Remember the special Appomattox stamp, April 9, 1965?

* * *

Thanks for reading and seeya around. Remember: Appomattox Is A Growing Town and County!

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Local trucker Carl Almond has retired from the trucking business after 47 years and five million miles. See story, page 5.

JAN